Letter No. 60. Tuesday - 15 July -

Major. J. H. Massey.
6 Palestinian Coy. The Buffs -
Middle East Force.

My own dear darling Barbara -

And still no letter from you since June 24th - I have had two P.C.s. but I know both of them off by heart now. I seem to be perpetually in a state of nervous expectation, & as we have both said before, living from post to post. You know exactly what I mean, & therefor we can understand & sympathise with eachother. It becomes very wearing, doesn't it, darling? I find my life to be not only affected, but almost controlled by the posts & my never diminishing hope of a letter from you, bringing with it some news which I am waiting for. In the mornings & afternoons, at post times, I can barely stop myself from running out of the office to see if the car has returned. And when I know it has arrived, I sit in my chair, straining my ears for the sound of footsteps from the Orderly Room coming towards me. And when the man just brings in a pile of mail & nothing from you, it is very difficult to hide my disappointment. My bitterest moments are when a letter comes in from my ma - a cheerful admission but to be understood clearly, - I wish so much that her letters would arrive with yours, - then I should not have that guilty feeling of disappointment.

Very little has happened since I last wrote to you, & I sent off rather a flat Telegraph this morning to say so. I had a severe ache in my right ear the day before yesterday - & it hurt like hell when I blew

my nose & when I dried my ear with the towel. But I began to think at once about a nice mastoid, or some ailment which would demand a change of air & climate, England for example. But the doctor syringed it & out came a large lump of wax, & I was immediately cured. For your information, wax in our ear is quite accidental & can as easily be caused by too little washing as too much! Every night & ache & pain I get, I think of how it may get me home. But I am so blasted healthy — which I suppose is a very good thing really. But I often wonder if there is such an illness as will leave no mark or ill effect but which will send me home, but I am afraid it does not exist. And even if it did, I should not catch it.

There is one thing I notice about myself. You remember how we both, & me in particular, because as you say, I am a club — used to get lines vertically up the sides of our mouths from laughing. I'm afraid those don't appear at all nowadays — but they will again when we are together again. It used to be grand, darling, those happy, marvellous times we used to have. Great lines up the sides of our mouths, & a wonderful, gorgeous looking of satisfaction & well being & contentment. & those lines will, there can be no doubt, come again. & they will be happier & lovelier than ever before. But I do want them to come soon, don't you darling? I can picture & imagine so much love & happiness, & in short & marvellous contentment

between us, when we meet again - I feel quite faint when I think about that time.

What else has happened. I have become a P.T. instructor in the last three days - my Corporal who had been on his course in Egypt, had to be sent away on an escort to Damascus, & nobody else seemed to be particularly suitable or competent, so I took them myself. And I made them work very hard, & they all seemed to enjoy it. This is more good training for me, & I shall be able to take you when I get home.

The Hon. Mrs Samuel called to see me today, in her capacity as President of Jewish Welfare, & she stayed & talked for over 1½ hours. I have told you about her before, & she really is a very charming & clever woman. She was very insistent that when I next came to Jerusalem, I must come & see herself & her husband, & they wanted take me about & show me all - I really must do my best to avail myself of this opportunity, as I am sure no two people are more competent to do this.

I have now told you about as much as I know of Jerusalem - Tel-Aviv. And I will now describe something of Haifa. You will be able to see from the map that it is on a headland, at the southern end of the Bay of Acre. And the town is, of course, dominated by the sea & the port, & Mount Carmel behind it. Its population is, I think, about 80,000, composed of approx. 60% Jewish & 40% Arab.

The Arab part is around H. the port area & mainly at the bottom of the Carmel — the two run into each other a little — but the Jewish part is on the lower part of the Carmel, to half way up — & then there are a great many odd streets, small groups of houses & bigger houses by themselves all over the mountain, & particularly right on top. You can perhaps imagine the marvellous view from the mountain. The port is looked straight down upon — you see the Mediterranean on either side of the headland, & right across to Acre & beyond & further along, to Syria. And way beyond all this. It is often possible to see Mount Hermon, snow capped, 28 ict miles, not feet.

The town itself is very modern, but extremely well & solidly built, nearly all of this white stone again, & of course it looks beautifully clean & pretty & good looking. And being built on a hill, almost the whole town can be seen at once, from top or bottom.

Wednesday - July 16th. I have had the most awful day today, auditing the various accounts of the Coy. They were prepared by the wretched, ridiculous Tony, & in spite of much advice & help from me, they were in the most awful mess — & instead of auditing them, I had to practically correct them. I was at it from 10 this morning until 7 this evening — it seemed pretty silly having to write across them in pencil & "Audited & found correct", after spending all that time putting them right. Anyway — I am bursting him off tomorrow morning early

Friday - 18th July. At the above point the day before yesterday, I just carried on & stayed awake any longer, & had to

go to bed, at 10.0 o'clock. I now sleep on the floor; all the beds having been withdrawn for use in hospitals. & my camp bed being rickety by now, & so I am saving it for when it is really necessary. But I have two mattresses, on top of eachother, on the floor, & it is very comfortable; I do not notice any difference at all. I still have my net, of course - down from the ceiling & tucked under the mattresses. & this keeps away all the things that fly & creep. Peter prefers it too, as he finds he can edge his way out one of the corners, by means of leaning his weight against the net.

The postal silence has been broken today, & at last. Your letter no 42 of May 11th came this morning - & this afternoon, all together, 4 pcs. - June 15, 19, & 25, & July 1. So I am way up in Heaven, or Devon, again, & hardly know myself. Dealing with the post cards first - our little Maxie sounds fine & healthy - though I am still dying for your letters to say what he looks like, & what colour his eyes are, if he has any hair, & if he looks at all like Lisa did - & what sort of things he does. A little wind & constipation should not cause you very much worry - though squawking at 3-30 am must be fairly annoying, I suppose it must have a lot to do with a healthy appetite. I hope you find a good doctor down there. Some nice old man of a family doctor, who knows all about babies & their bits of ways & illnesses. I really do feel nowadays, that such a doctor is best for children - somebody who can diagnose by instinct & years of experience. Though I am hoping you will not actually need one at all. I think you should have one, & get to know him & let him

call round every two, three or four weeks, & just have a look at & a chat with you - Nan - & your ma too. And it is wonderful about your quick & apparently complete recovery. I am blessing Mr Hughes with all my heart, & will go on doing so for a very long time. But you really have amazing strength & vitality. That is what has made you better so soon. It is marvellous, after your truly awful pregnancy, at the end of which you were feeling so done up & exhausted. And it gives us so much more confidence for the daughter we shall want to have, when we are together again, & feel that the time has come to try. You shared, & pray & pray that you will, carry on really well & happily & comfortably now - with you feeling good, & Nan progressing, & the bungalow & the place being so lovely - & coming up to your expectations. You have not said anything yet of what happened to Peggy & her baby, & I wonder have they come with you too - & also the feral Amy.

Of course you were right to go by car, & I am thankful that you were able to get hold of one; even had it cost more it would still have been worth it, as the train journey would have been a hastily arranged affair. Considering the times, & the price of things, it was not expensive, because I expect you took a pretty good waggon load of luggage too. The whole thing was justified by the fact that you had a reasonably pleasant journey, & arrived

safe & sound.

About names, darling, Max does seem to have stuck, doesn't it. Are you wondering whether you really like it or not? Because you also mention Daniel — Samuel in your letters — but I do not like either of those much. I prefer David Max. Max has a slight German taint — & also seems to have some connection with Jews, of whom I am having quite enough at the moment. But I am quite sure that when I return to "England, our England," & the dales of Yorkshire, I shall quite forget these slight misgivings — & especially if you like, & have no doubts about the name of Max. And David Max sounds pleasant — & D. M. Massey, too.

And about my prowess. I think I will just not bother. And in any case, I certainly have no compass — there are no such things in these parts, & apparently no arrangements are made for people who want clothes from home. But mine will last through next winter alright, & there cannot be another one. So we will just save the 3 gns + whatever d/o my lovely Ad'guist charges nowadays. And if my Lilies arrive, I shall always have those for smarter occasions, & I shall now be allowed to wear spurs with them, as a major. Rather funny, when you consider for a moment my prowess on a horse. You know, darling, I really am becoming more & more stingy, with a view to seeing how much we really can save to make

our new beginning after the war. And I believe, if ever I were to become a Henry-Colonel, I should become stingier still. I think the reason is that now that we have some money, there is so much more point, & more actual result, to be seen from saving. By the way, you said in your letter that you enclosed the new Bank statement, but, of course, you never did! for really are a one, darling. If you say you enclose a thing, you can practically be guaranteed not to enclose it. However, as I say to my Sgt Instructor — God preserve us from efficient women! This is when we have a laugh at your various ways of addressing letters — no two ever the same: and how with only a 2d stamp on & no "Air Mail" written on.

But the main thing about saving is that I have so much to save for, & so much to look forward to. And if I were to spend money to any extent out here — by & on myself — it would be a criminal waste, when compared with the ways & means by which we can spend it together — either on permanent or lasting things, or on having a gloriously happy time together.

You paid me a terrific compliment in your letter today, even if a sad & painful one — when you said that even if the baby should not live, you would be able to carry on, because our love for eachother would be enough for us both. I thank

God that it did not arise to put this to the test — but even so I am overwhelmingly grateful & happy that that is the way you feel about me & about our love. And, dearest darling, you said too, & in so many words, that love such as ours only came once in a lifetime. Oh darling, I do feel proud of, & satisfied with myself, that you should be able to say that to me. I know it so well & so deeply about myself & how I feel. That if ever I had not got you to come back to — I just would not come back. But as long as I have you & know that you love me the same — nothing else matters or enters into things at all.

And another thing darling — it was so lovely to hear you say you loved my letters — that I wrote well & perceptively I do hope I am always able to make you feel that, because I sometimes get the idea, usually after a letter has gone, that I have been rather dull. So you must please tell me if & when I am. Letters are of such first rate importance nowadays, when they are all we have, & I spend so much time writing to you, or thinking about it, that it would be a tragedy if ever my letters became uninteresting or dull to you. Though I am certain they are sometimes, when I am feeling a bit low at not having heard from you.

You said again that Marjorie Rawsthorne was very upset, & had no money & very few letters, but knew that to be a major. I told you about it before, didn't I? He was very badly dressed at the I.B.D., when he drank & spent much too much, & used to explain

Haifa - Wolfes Mrs Samuel 10.

me by sleeping solidly from 2-0 to 6-30 - then sit up all night talking utter rubbish to people who share his leanings towards rubbish. And Frank I used to nag him about working to marjorie. He would say he had done so. We knew quite well he was lying. It is so easy in the Army, & out here especially, & knows now he probably has a hard working job - to spend the evening by just having a few drinks, dinner, hearing the news, playing cards & chatting - never to make the effort to go write. And I'm quite sure that is what Rex is doing. I'm afraid he is an extremely weak minded spineless, & very sorry sad individual. It is really hard on marjorie. And as a R.A.O.C. he will have extra allowances.

Apart my hair darling - you had just had the photo. I sometimes wonder myself if it is worth going back a bit: it is most difficult to say. But I had a very close scrutiny this evening, & really think it is about as usual, perhaps a fraction of an inch nearer the parting. But I am religiously oiling & washing. But there are more more white ones, I can do nothing about these.

How kind of Mrs Peter C. to send that a garment - she is a dear old soul really - I shall always remember her letter about Lisa. What about God parents darling? Would you like Frank Scott to be a father & Vera a mother? If you agree, you ask them will you. You know I will write again in the next few days. All dearest love to you darling, Barbara heart. A big kiss to Marie - many big Pooly kisses to you.

Harry.